Digital community at Hyderabad

290. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government can envisage a project on the lines of 'Unwire Bangalore' project for Hyderabad for an ubiquitous city-wide infrastructure for an integrated fully seamless wireless digital community;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, whether the Department of IT can extend any help to the State Government of Andhra Pradesh for this venture if the State wishes to do so; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Promotion of Internet in rural areas

291. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Internet subscribers in the country, State-wise;

(b) the percentage of population having access to Internet, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to promote Internet in the rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) The total number of Internet subscribers as reported by Internet Service Providers (ISPs) is 7.05 million (as on 31.03.2006). These are geographically spread all over the country and registered with class A, B & C ISPs. In order to promote Inernet in rural areas, BSNL is providing Internet access on loca call basis throughout the country including rural areas. For further proliferation of Internet in

rural areas, BSNL under its "Internet Dhaba" scheme provides one free Internet access connection along with 25% discount on the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) access charges to the franchisee of Internet Dhabas in the Rural Block Headquarters

DIT has also taken up an initiative for setting up of Common Public Information Centres (CICs) in the hilly, far-flung areas of the country for socio-economic developments of these regions. CICs are a citizen's interface for IT enabled e-government services and are provided with VSAT connectivity and computer peripherals.

487 CICs at block level have been set up in the 8 North Eastern States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. DIT has set up 116 CICs in Jammu & Kashmir and 7 CICs in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Insurance scheme for postal department employees

292. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to implement an insurance scheme for the unorganised workers of the postal department;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total number of unorganised workers who would be benefited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No. Sir There are no unorganised workers in the Department of Posts.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Telecommunication links on Indo-Pak border in Rajasthan

293. DR. GYAN PRAKASH PILANIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to establish telecommunication links for better border management, particularly 1040 km long Indo-Pak border, in Rajasthan;